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ABSTRACT

Thirteen school districts, a regional training network, and a university in Florida formed a partnership to develop support for the implementation of the statewide plan, "Blueprint 2000." Funded by the Florida Department of Education, the partnership used a quality and systems framework for helping the schools and districts in their restructuring efforts. This paper describes first-year outcomes of the project, one of which was the development of the Educational Quality Benchmark System (EQBS). The paper explores the equal importance of focusing on partnership processes and strategies that encourage ongoing identification, dialogue, and negotiation of basic epistemological and philosophical assumptions. These issues contribute to developing a shared vision of the product, processes, and outcomes for successful partnerships. Part 1 defines partnerships, the policy background of the alliance, the purpose of the partnership development, and the project design. Part 2 investigates different beliefs and philosophical assumptions about constructing partnerships around scientific rationalism and social constructivism, choices made both at the personal and organizational levels for the social construction of a partnership around dominator or partnership mental models of power. Factors that contribute to successful partnering include a shared vision, common values, communication structures, the missing trust factor, and power. Part 3 describes two models in the EQBS and their promise for restructuring schooling. It is contended that process is as important as the product. The failure to discern the magnitude of differing world views, the erroneous assumptions made concerning collaboration, the neglect to establish shared definitions and mental models, and the lack of communication structures contributed to misunderstandings among project partners. Transformative partnerships call for a new language that leaves the scientific rational model behind and incorporates some of the premises of humanism, quality, and systems thinking into its processes and work design. Four figures and two tables are included. (LMI)

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Developing an Educational Quality Benchmark System (EQBS): A Partnership in Restructuring

A Paper Presentation

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INTRODUCTION

A partnership among 13 school districts, a regional training network, and a university in Florida was formed across institutions to develop a pilot support system for the implementation of *Blueprint 2000*. This partnership was born out of a common vision of supporting school culture change, within a Quality and Systems framework for assisting schools and school districts in their restructuring efforts. The partnership was funded by Florida's Department of Education in July of 1993. The outcome of the partnership, both its product and processes of work over a year's time, are shared in this paper. The product that resulted was an *Educational Quality Benchmark System* (*EQBS*), created for the pilot to guide the change process over time, which will be discussed, as well as the processes that led to successful and unsuccessful components of the partnership.

This paper contributes to the literature on Quality, Systems Thinking, Change, Restructuring and Partnerships at a time when more and more agencies are entering partnership ventures across institutions. It is critical that we begin to increase our knowledge and share our understanding of how to construct more successful partnerships, since Kanter (1988) reports that over 70% of these partnerships end in failure. Further, the literature is full of failed restructuring efforts (Barth, 1990; Fernandez & Underwood, 1993; Sarson, 1990). This paper examines our experiences in this partnership development and the *EQBS*'s contribution to restructuring. It explores the equal importance of focusing on partnership processes and strategies that encourage ongoing identification, dialogue and negotiation of basic epistemological and philosophical assumptions. These issues contribute to developing a shared vision of the product, processes and outcomes for successful partnerships. A mental model for dialoguing some of the issues around power is presented to assist those who are entering partnerships. We contend that the failure to address certain assumptions and perceptions around epistemological and philosophical issues, will negatively influence the direction, dynamics, and overall interpretation of the work within partnerships.

The paper is divided into three parts to address the partnership story. **Part One: The Partnership Development** defines partnerships from the literature, the policy background for our alliance, the purpose of the partnership development and the project design and buy-in. **Part Two: The Epistemological Framework** investigates differing beliefs and philosophical assumptions about constructing partnerships around scientific rationalism and social constructivism, choices made both personally, and organizationally for socially constructing a partnership around dominator or partnership mental models of power, and factors that contribute to successful partnering: *shared vision, common*

values, communication structures, the missing X factor of trust, and dealing with issues of power. **Part Three: The Education Quality Benchmark System** describes two models in the *EQBS*, a partnership product, and their promise for restructuring schooling, within the different epistemological frameworks. The paper concludes with of summary key learnings from the partnership, retrospective insights, and recommendations to those who are considering partnerships or using the *EQBS* to restructure practices and move into a Quality System.

PART ONE: THE PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Definitions

Partnerships have been defined as "cross functional teams" that span agency types (Snyder, 1994), and also referred to as "boundaryless organizations" formed in the minds of participants to accomplish common goals (Tichy & Ulrich, 1990). Poirier and Houser (1993) define partnerships within the context of business partnering "as the creation of cooperative business alliances between constituencies within an organization, and between an organization and its suppliers and customers" (p. 56).

A recent evaluation of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's *New Futures Initiative*, with over $40 million spent to alter the life chances of disadvantaged youth in six cities, concluded that the agency partners failed to involve members in the targeted communities in solving their own problems (Welhage, Smith & Lipham, 1992; White & Welhage 1995). White and Welhage argue that turf battles among agencies, a lack of trust amongst members in the targeted communities, and the hierarchy of the formalized partnership contributed to the failure of achieving the three partnership outcomes.

Peters (1992) discusses partnerships in relation to autonomy. He states that individuals are involved in becoming more autonomous, with increasing levels of responsibility, as they rely on teammates and other members in an expansive network that includes "outsiders." The *New Futures Initiatives* excluded *outsiders* - - - the members of the targeted communities in the partnership. Strong relations among the people in the partnership were never attained to construct a culture of "shared norms and expectations" (White & Wellage, 1995, p. 34).

Limerick and Cunnington (1993) have coined a term for the contradiction between autonomy and teamwork in partnerships, which has been defined as "collaborative individualism" (p. 112). They conclude that collaborative individualism is a function of individuals who possess the expertise to work without direction, but need to work in partnerships to achieve common agreed upon purposes. The *New Futures Initiatives* had

the expertise within the partnership to accomplish the outcomes of the project, but they never reached consensus on their shared purpose to achieve these outcomes. The balance between collaboration among the partners and their individualism as agencies, however, was never fully understood. In the following quote from Limerick and Cunnington, they state that:

> Collaborative individualism and the emergence of strategic networks go hand in hand. They are part of the same mind-set---part of the reaction against hierarchies, the focus on individual competence, and the search for collaboration. Moreover, the emergence of networks in practice has torn the individual apart from the static fabric of the hierarchical organization. It has emancipated the individual. Some have found this new freedom both strange and threatening. Yet there is little doubt that networks are acting as a school for a new worldview (p. 113).

The results of the Annie E. Casey evaluation suggest there was a great deal of difficulty breaking out of the traditional hierarchy to affect change. White and Welhage (1995) report that the case managers who were brought into the partnership to manage services across programs met in July of 1989 to request that their roles be more clearly defined in their work across agencies. With over 60 case managers in attendance, a letter was drafted to the various collaboratives. Not one of them responded. The conclusion was that the collaboratives found it difficult to break traditional boundaries of work patterns within their existing hierarchies. The collaboratives would not challenge their own expert authorities, even when the case managers requested action, to achieve the balance between collaboration and autonomy, and to redirect the work energies toward the project's goals.

Does this mean that building new networks and partnerships must explore alternative ways of working together, other than the traditional hierarchy, with its rigid boundaries, to free people to affect meaningful outcomes? The implications from the Annie E. Casey Foundation *New Futures Initiatives* suggest that in part, partnerships must be forged within a context of new work systems.

Fifteen school agencies in Florida sought to address the challenges of new work systems, when they embraced a new philosophical frame for collaboration. The goal of the partnership addressed the State's balancing of collaboration and autonomy in the school. The potential success of this partnership rested in the willingness among the partners to socially construct new work patterns around a common vision. The failure of some aspects of the partnership, we shall argue, rests within interpretation of epistemology, power, and resources.

Policy Background for the Project

Blueprint 2000 is Florida's response to *America 2000* and the *Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills* (*SCANS*). Within the *Blueprint 2000* document, the Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability discussed the reform legislation passed by the Florida legislature in 1991, which had transferred the authority for reform and restructuring to the school site as the basic unit of accountability. The authors of *Blueprint 2000* had incorporated the language from *America 2000* and *SCANS* into the document to guide restructuring efforts in schools within the State of Florida.

The effect of *Blueprint 2000* is to mandate School districts to move from centralized decision making structures to those that are decentralized. Districts and schools are developing strategies that enable them to become flexible and responsive to their customers' needs. Instead of being accountable for the processes of schooling, the new accountability legislation created a different set of rules in which schools are held accountable for documenting and demonstrating continuous improvement by positively affecting the outcomes of schooling for students. These outcomes are delineated in *Blueprint 2000* as seven goals, with standards and objectives. All levels of professionals are involved in achieving the goals of each School Improvement Plan. In other words, *Blueprint 2000* requires a virtual revolution in the way that most educators work together in schools. Success depends on a high involvement work culture, with well developed systems of ongoing communication, and cooperation.

To monitor the progress of schools, the State required that each school submit a School Improvement Plan at the completion of the 92-93 school year. The School Improvement Plan was based on a systems perspective and a Quality philosophy of continuous improvement. Guidelines established for school improvement plans stated that each plan should include a:

- Vision Statement
- List of Prioritized Needs
- Clearly Stated Goals and Objectives
- Action Plan
- Evaluation Strategies, and a
- Process for Review and Revision Procedures (pp. 64-69).

Purpose of the Partnership: Developing an Education Quality Benchmark System

A group of Florida educators met several years ago to ask the question: How can we help school leaders manage change in their work cultures required by he new Florida reform package, known as *Blueprint 2000*? This group was composed of school and district

leaders from several school districts around a major urban area, and faculty from USF's College of Education, which spearheaded the group. Eventually, the planning group invited other leaders from school districts, the College, and the business community to help shape a concept that would extend beyond the normal services that any one group could provide. A member of the Florida Education Reform and Accountability Commission was part of the group, and suggested that we begin to think *big* in our preparation of a proposal for the State. Our institution was to assist schools and districts toward an alternative to the traditional State auditing practices, that would build the capacities of school work cultures over time to improve the success of students.

The proposal was prepared by the partnership, and submitted by the university. It called for developing a comprehensive system of diagnostic and development assistance, which would build upon the best available expertise in the region, and lead to stronger partnerships across institutions to transform schooling work cultures. The Florida Education Reform and Accountability Commission approved the proposal, with the understanding that the partnership would employ a Quality System of some sort to govern the work. The Commissioner of Education then sent letters to each superintendent in the West Central Region (13) to invite two persons from their district, who managed school improvement district-wide, to participate in shaping the new Quality assistance system. The university assumed responsibility for working with these leaders to identify or to develop and pilot a new Quality system. The regional training network assumed responsibility for managing the pilot schools in the projects and designing the professional development system of assistance that was to follow.

In a two day retreat with district leaders and members from the design team, the challenges of education today, as found in the literatures and state policies were reviewed. Quality literature's were also explored, along with the national Baldrige Award and Florida's Sterling Award criteria (Snider, 1994 a & b). Rather than adopting an existing system designed for business, the design team and district leaders requested that the university Research Team develop an education-specific quality system: one that would build upon Quality principles, Systems thinking, and Change, and address the challenges of education within a changing social and technological era. Various literature's were studied in greater depth by the university team, and a prototype education Quality system (*EQBS*) was designed that would provide benchmarks over time to guide change efforts.

After members of the design team reacted to many drafts, a content validation was conducted, using educators from all school district role groups, as well as Quality, School Reform and Restructuring experts to rate the five parts of the new system (Acker-Hocevar, 1994). The result of the validation yielded high ratings for all five parts of the

content, with minor modifications to the two models, presented later in the paper. The system can now be used by educators interested in Quality, with confidence, to benchmark their change processes.

Project Design and Buy-In

The project design, funded by the Florida Accountability and Reform Commission delineated three phases for the pilot during the year's funding: 1) the Development Phase, 2) the Diagnostic Phase, and the 3) the Pilot Phase. Each partner was interested in a particular phase of the alliance, although the work was managed by the university and the regional network training agencies across all phases. The university development team was committed to the Development Phase of the project because of their interest in Quality and Systems work redesign for restructuring schooling within a social constructivist framework. The Development Team knew that the challenge schools faced was in both meeting the requirements of the existing Bureaucratic System, while simultaneously developing new skills that moved beyond a compliance and audit mentality of "looking good on paper," to a Quality philosophy of meeting and exceeding customer needs. The university's task was to seek input, and then agreement from the participants in the project on a model that would serve as the basis for assisting schools in moving into a Quality System.

The regional training network was interested in the Pilot Phase of the project because of their involvement with schools in providing training. The regional training network would develop criteria for the selection of Pilot sites to test the feasibility and utility of the Quality System. Selection criteria would be established with the assistance of the Steering Committee that would oversee the project. Additionally, the project design indicated that the regional training network would assist schools in the Diagnostic Phase. Phase Two of the project, which was the least defined of all the Phases, would later become a source of debate between the university and regional training network in relation to the focus of the pilot. The debate would center around what was to be piloted: the new Quality System (*EQBS*) or training in Quality tools?

Finally, the school districts were motivated to become a voice in all three phases of the project because of the State requirements to manage the change process as outlined in *Blueprint 2000*. The school district buy-in was essential to the project's success. Members of the Commission believed that school districts would see the project as an opportunity to influence the State's means for evaluating School Improvement Plans. The Quality System could serve as an alternative evaluation system for schools, which would move away from an audit system for measuring compliance.

The members of the project team wanted to create a new system for Florida schools that embraced ideas inherent in learning organizations (Garvin, 1993; Pinchot & Pinchot, 1993; Senge, 1990). The System would have the potential for State-wide adoption as schools identified and built seven Quality work systems that they could continually improve. Results would be reflected in increased customer success and satisfaction across multiple customer groups through improved services and programs. Data collection and analysis would be an every day practice. These newly adopted practices held promise for freeing Florida schools from dealing with compliance issues to address the needs of the populations they served. A Quality System offered hope for schools in gaining the necessary autonomy they needed to manage their own change processes, with the least amount of bureaucratic red-tape, and the potential for innovation.

The attractiveness of the project to the State Commission, then, was their interest in linking the success of the project to change over time, within a Quality philosophy and systems framework that was based on customer success and satisfaction. The Change process was envisioned as one in which schools identified where they were along a continuum from Bureaucratic to Quality indicators (the system is discussed in detail in Part Five) (Snyder, 1994a). Members on the Commission believed that the only way schools could begin to make systemic changes was through the adoption of this Quality framework, which could radically alter the existing practices in schools.

PART TWO: ESTABLISHING AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

From Scientific Rationalism to Social Constructivism

The epistemological framework for the partnership was grounded in the reality of Phenomenology as opposed to Scientific Rationalism. What did this mean in terms of the project? Figure 1 represents the contrast between some of the beliefs inherent in the social construction of the Bureaucratic Organization as compared to that of the Quality Organization. The box represents the boundaries of the bureaucratic organization, which is non-responsive to changes outside of its boundaries. In contrast, the Quality Organization's boundaries are permeable to allow the organization to gather and analyze data and information outside of its boundaries as well as inside of them.

[Insert Figure 1 here]

The Bureaucratic focus, seen within a paradigm of scientific rationalism, emphasizes the means to control individuals to comply with organizational rules of

standardization and uniformity, within a hierarchy of power relationships. External data are acquired through scientific processes, and become the site for knowledge development. In contrast, the Quality Organization, viewed from a worldview of phenomenology, scans the environment and devises systems that allow maximum autonomy for teams of individuals to develop more customized processes to meet the diversity of needs within a given system. The sources of decision making and knowledge building are not only based on individual experiences, but also on the shared experiences of the group members. Subjective experiences replace objective scientific processes of discovery. The core of the Quality organization, then, is a dispersed center of power created by sharing information within the organization, with teams that solve organizational problems.

Assumptions that stem from scientific rationalism have their roots in logical positivism. This philosophy views the world as objective, and value free, existing within a universe where laws and principles can be used to regulate, predict and control behavior from a "best truth" perspective. Social constructivism in contrast, is grounded in phenomenology, and views the world as subjective, value-laden, within a systems perspective of interdependencies and multiple perspectives, where "truth" depends on where you are in the system.

Scientific rationalism, the by-product of the industrial and enlightenment eras, was modernity's legacy to us. Inherent to this way of thinking are the philosophical assumptions of control, in which to regulate the self and others through this rational view of people within an organizations. Without the systems perspective, isolation, fragmentation, victimization, and self-interest prevail (Acker-Hocevar, 1994; Crowell, 1989; Senge & Lannon-Kim, 1991; Snyder, 1994 a & b).

Social constructivism, on the other hand, is a reaction against knowledge that is quantifiable and presented through operationalized definitions. It grows out of phenomenolgy, and seeks to construct meaning through dialogue to build shared mental models that represent common beliefs and values. Dealing with multiple explanations, and issues of complexity, understanding and giving voice to multiple interpretations is based on community interests rather than narrowly defined bureaucratic interests. Socially constructing reality promotes a different way of thinking, knowing and working (Senge, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992); and, it operates from the point of view that acknowledges differences, while building on consensus and commonalities.

The two boxes illustrate some fundamentally different assumptions about how people work together in organizations. In the Bureaucratic organization, individuals who question rules within the organization are viewed as problems. In contrast, in the Quality

Organization, people are encouraged to question rules and systems that are ineffective; they become the heroes and heroines of the organization. Why would there be such a difference in perceptions?

First of all, the way that people view others within the organization is a mirror of the organization's work culture. When the organization's work culture focuses on "control over," people who raise questions, by the very act, signal a threat to the assumptions of power within the structures of the organization; compliance is necessary to maintain the organization's control mechanisms. The difference is that in a Quality organization, the ability of members to raise critical questions and problem-solve is essential to the survival and success of the organization's movement. In this case, raising questions is valued and encouraged by group members.

The university environment fosters the kind of collaborative individualism discussed earlier by Limerick & Cunnington (1993). The autonomy in the intellectual environment of the university promotes questioning and working outside traditional intellectual boundaries as a way of life. The regional training network, on the other hand, is bound by bureaucratic mandates, changes in state and national policy, and inservice requirements, and tends to operate as an appendage of the State Bureaucracy.

The university and regional training network, therefore, had different work culture and professional values to bring to the partnership: one that raised questions; the other that legitmized compliance to new State rules. These different values resulted in significantly different perceptions in members' roles and responsibilities. If group members operated from the "old mindset" of hierarchy and compliance, comments and questions were seen as threats, and the person was labeled. Labels functioned to control the behavior of others. Although subtle at first, the labels were symptomatic of the necessity to steer the outcomes of the project through the manipulation of the members and certain ad hoc committees. In other words, the labels functioned to sort out who might raise questions, as well as the legitimacy of those questions, and who might not.

The labels overheard by members in the partnership seemed harmless in the beginning, and appeared to be grounded in a sincere desire to move the project forward. Some of these labels were "intellectual," "know-it-all," "not a team-player," "the project's principal," and "someone who talks out of the group." These labels, however, were a code for the beginning of a philosophical schism for sanctioning the control over behaviors viewed as legitimate or illegetimate within the partnership under different epistemological and philosophical frameworks.

The university team felt that it was important to listen to all the different viewpoints, and socially construct a system that reflected multiple perspectives, and that

gave schools the greatest amount of autonomy. The training network viewed their role as trainers, using a traditional Organizational Model (OD), which privileged their roles as consultants with expertise and information to share with the schools. When the university team questioned the assumptions of the traditional, authoritarian OD model as appropriate for building learning communities and partnerships with our schools, there was strong resistance and the beginning of a "we" against "them" attitude that emerged and remained throughout the duration of the project.

The OD model is based on the principles that the outside consultant has the expertise, and can "fix" what is wrong with the organization. Its assumptions are rooted in scientific rationalism and the "one best way" to do things. Instead of building internal dialogue, there is an external agenda. The university's assumptions, in contrast, were based on beliefs that together, we were inventing new forms of schooling, drawing on the multiple perspectives and expertise of all the partnership members.

Dominator Vs. Partnership Models: A Mental Model for Issues of Power

The *EQBS* story thus far appears to model how partners can work together across institutions for common purposes. This partnership story only lasted a year, however. The university, which launched the project, was cut-out of the pilot activity at the end of the first year. The university had developed an education-specific Quality system (*EQBS*), involving the partners at every step of the design and validation process. In the end, however, the regional training network eliminated the university from the project, which was followed by a failed hostile take-over of its product: the *EQBS*.

There was a tremendous struggle as we came to terms with the influence of the regional training network, which receives its main funding from the State, and is an arm of the Department of Education, to control the resources of the project the first year (of which we received almost none). Although the university sponsored the project partially, the regional training network was able to exclude us from the project the second year through its use of power and coercion. Even more difficult was comprehending how the regional training network had established with all its school districts, that the project should be governed by its Board of Directors, rather than by the Partnership Steering Committee, which represented the partnership institutions. Although many district leaders were troubled by this, they feared repercussions for their districts if they forced a confrontation between the network, which represented them, and the university.

As we have deconstructed the experience over the last six months, we realize that at the heart of what happened was an illusion of collaboration and partnerships across institutions. This experience has led us to posit that we are not alone in this experience,

for our partnership story is not only one of producing a product; but, it is also a story of the systems that failed to facilitate its work. The network had developed a strong political base for school improvement over a decade, hiring university professors for specific tasks. Their future control over the school improvement agenda with school districts demanded that they continue to direct events and resources. It also meant that university involvement was made at their request, and under their conditions.

While there were two major partners in the project (the university and the regional training network), all the resources went directly from the State to the regional training network, which managed their use. The university received very little support for its development and research activity; no dollars were received into the university for the project. The regional training network refused any information about budget and expenditures, never agreed to convene the Steering Committee after six months time, and also began to create myths about the project and events that occurred, especially the role of the university. This project, which had been initiated by the university as a partnership venture, ended with the regional training network gaining control. This control of the project was a way to eliminate the "problem people," and maintain their State monopoly over training. The university's influence over the School Improvement agenda, as evidenced in the broad based enthusiasm being generated around the State for our new Quality System, was viewed as a threat to the prospective power base of the regional training network to control future resources.

We now understand the language and actions inherent to two fundamentally different mindsets about partnerships, within bureaucratic assumptions of domination, and a partnership model based on balancing self-interest, with the needs of others, to jointly solve problems in a community. Eisler (1986) poses a theory of Dominator cultures vs. Partnership cultures. Dominator cultures have evolved over the last hundreds of centuries, and have their roots in "power over." She cites evidence for a precipitous moment in history in which we can execute choice to design partnership cultures, after nearly 5,000 years of Dominator cultures throughout the world. We believed that we had an opportunity to create a partnership that could have transformed the way work was done.

Now, however, there are many new up-front conditions we will place on future partnership endeavors that center around power and resource issues. The strength of the prevailing dominator culture within the regional training network, dressed in partnership rhetoric, prevailed. As the partnership unfolded, there was a growing sense of threat to their power base; as we entered the scene as a major contributing force for school improvement in the state. The university had crossed a line, and in so doing threatened

the power of the network and its fragile economic future. The dominator patterns of control over acquired resources, and the domination of the governance structure and work activity emerged as the power strategies. The partnership dissolved when the university insisted on a partnership model of operation, as opposed to the domination of one institution over all activity and resources.

What did we learn? "Power-over," which is the central value in the Dominator culture, was functioning in our project in the guise of partnership. Were we naive? Yes. In our analysis over time, we identified some myths about partnership ventures that may be useful to others. Myth 1: Partnerships can exist when one institution controls the resources and the opportunities. Myth 2: It doesn't matter who has the resources and how they are distributed. Myth 3: Given the opportunity and the resources, institutions will learn how to share power. Myth 4: There is no fear within partnerships, every one is working toward the same goals. Myth 5: Hostile take-over don't happen in partnerships, especially among honest educators. Myth 6: The dominator model of leadership gives way under conditions of collaboration. Myth 7: Good people will rise up against a hostile take-over.

What, then are the issues and dilemmas in partnerships? A major up-front issue is having equal access to resources, information and opportunity. Hidden agendas need to be uncovered early, as partnership activity proceeds, for they always leave trails for those who are alert. Keeping the partnership objective alive is essential, and working together across work teams to share and react to developments produces the energy that is required.

Dilemmas also exist, such as: How can control and power agendas be uncovered when partners know so well the rhetoric of collaboration? How does one learn to read the early warning signs of power-over and co-optation? How does a partner respond to misinformation that is spread by another partner without destroying good faith completely? And, how does a partner respond to a take-over in ways that don't destroy future partnership with others? The message here is to stay alert, and confront all the "little signs" along the way; they may be little errors, or more, perhaps, a plan to seize power: silence is not golden.

In our interest to promote partnership efforts, we have conceptualized a *River of Power*. Figure 2 presents the model for identifying issues around power, and serves as a source of dialogue for those who are considering partnerships. The river is narrow at its source of power, based on self-interest and control over resources and people, limiting interaction and influence to a few. The Bureaucratic Dominator Model represents the idea of "power over" others and is viewed as a form of coercion. Forms of coercion in

organizations today are psychological and experienced as fear, witnessed as compliance, observed through silence and passive acceptance by those who have little recourse but to comply or form coalitions of resistance.

[Insert Figure 2]

"Power to" is the expansion of power within the bureaucracy to develop members' expertise. Firmly grounded within Bureaucratic principles, and based on a behavioral model of regulating outcomes, the results are often fragmented programs and services that operate in isolation. Training is provided based on the needs of the organization, rather than on the needs of its client groups. "Power shared" is the next stop along the currents of power. At this point, the river begins to widen and the organization is asking members to be involved in making decisions. Training in conflict resolution and negotiation skills, teaming, decision-making and communication are usually being given to members, as the organization begins to make a commitment for developing the necessary skills for people to work together (Touchton, 1994).

The Dam represents a significant mindshift from the Bureaucratic Dominator Model, based on Self-Interest to the Network/Partnership Model, based on Personal Mastery (Senge, 1991) and the Needs of Others. The words on the other side of the river denote a "virtual crossing over to the other side," a change in the way that members think about their roles and responsibilities in the organization. Power is shared with members, but members are also expanding their personal power to solve organizational problems. No longer are members within the organization being asked for only input that may or may not be used. The dam, which controls the water, is unleashed, and directs the river's flow toward the vision to achieve organizational results.

The river's flow of water, currents, and man-made dams, are viewed as either obstacles or energy utilized for work, and present choices for individuals and organizations in their journey downstream, upstream, or caught in whirlpools of inaction. The river is never still, and it continues to move even if the people expend a lot of energy trying not to go anywhere. If individuals and organizations want to move beyond self-interest, fear, compliance, and external mechanisms of control, then, choices need to be made to move down the river. Choices need to be made concerning the development of skills and competencies that promote the readiness of individuals and organizations to work together successfully, within structures that balance personal and professional interests.

It is in this journey to other bank of the river, that people are prepared to cross agencies and businesses to work together in new work forms to address the personal, organizational, community and societal issues of others. The ability to trust the intended actions of others frees people to meet their own needs as well as to have a greater impact on the community. Partnerships, then, are a new way of utilizing human resources, while effecting changes in and across different organizations, which have positive affects on the larger community. There is a balance of personal and organizational power. Partnerships transcend the boundaries of bureaucratic control and become transformative agencies by the nature of their work, in search of transmuting work system, programs, and services, and their effects.

Factors that Contribute to Successful Partnering

Shared Vision

The vision of the partnership was to create a Quality System for school districts to benchmark where they were so they could begin to transform their existing practices. That all seemed simple enough. After all a shared vision is supposed to capture the essence of the organization's purpose, guide work throughout the system, and have positive effects across groups (Ciampa, 1992; Deming, 1993; Peters, 1992; Senge, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992; Snyder & Acker-Hocevar, 1995). *But, the catch is that a vision is not static.* Can you imagine Henry Ford having the same vision today that he had in the early 20th century.

Organizations receive information so much faster now than in years past. The challenge is to be flexible, yet planned, according to Handy (1193), so that the organization is able to respond to new information in the form of changing trends, client input and internal innovation, without disrupting the entire organization. In other words, how does an organization, or in our case a partnership, respond to new information, with the least amount of disruption? Fullan (1993) concluded in his "Eight Lessons For the New Paradigm of Change" in Lesson Number Four that "Vision and Strategic Planning Come Later" (p.128). Fullan warned people involved in the change process not to be premature in their visions, as premature visions lead to blind planning.

The project was planned to be completed in a year. But, the attendees of the retreat requested that a Quality System (*EQBS*) be designed for their use. This request required eight months for research, design and validation tasks, for what became known as the *EQBS*. The regional training network, on the other hand, proceeded to design training programs and instruments unnecessary within the context of the request. The new Quality

System was designed as a benchmarking tool. In changing directions within the partnership's normal events, the vision to assist schools to develop their work cultures to have the internal capacities to respond to various customer groups was lost. The functions of the *EQBS* was never understood by the regional training network as a major tool to accomplish the partnership vision.

Shared Values or a Culture of Conflict

In reality, our partnership lacked the repeated and ongoing communication needed to clarify meanings and expectations within the partnership. The university team and the regional training network team had embraced the rhetoric of the learning organization, yet rhetoric did not translate into *meaning* as Garvin (1993) defines it. Specifically, the knowledge of how learning organizations operated had not modified the behavior of the partners enough to set-up an agreed upon mechanism for ongoing dialogue. Our regional project required action learning that incorporated the ideals of learning organizations. Garvin (1993) summarizes the learning organization as creating a culture where there is meaning, management and measurement. He defines meaning in the context of the learning organization's skill "at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insight" (p. 80).

From an interpretive view of organizations (Carlsen, 1991), which examines the subjective experiences of the partners, it would have been difficult to know what the interpretations of each partner's experiences were along the course of the year, as the university team and the network team seemed to be coming from different philosophical premises. It appeared that the university team operated from an interpretive view of making sense out of their experiences along the way, as a means of understanding the nature of their learning within the context of the partnership. The network team tended to speak in the abstract about how the partnership was going by quoting what Deming would have said, or how Senge would have approached the project. This lack of personal dialogue became an obstacle for sincere communication to take place.

The network team seemed to be coming from a more rational model, which ignored our shared experiences, and spoke instead from quotes and the timelines of work according to the initial plan, as if it represented the "real" timetable. Although adjustments were made to accommodate the research, design and validation of the product, new information and insights into the work processes of the project around the *EQBS* were ignored as irrelevant to the project, or the time needed to develop the instrumentation for the *EQBS*. Instead, this ongoing discussion around timelines constructed months before

as "guessitimates," was later used to insinuate that the university was not meeting their time commitments, and were therefore not team players.

The Role of Communication

People communicated in a multitude of ways both their commitment or lack of commitment, excitement or disinterest, and level of participation or non-participation in the project. But communication occurs on more levels than language. Limerick and Cunnington (1993) stated that," Language on its own, is not enough to secure shared meaning. It has to be represented and reinforced in other organizational processes and symbols" (p. 201). Further, there is a difference between language and speech. Speech is centered in language in which meaning is found. To move to a new epistemological framework, required a new language that represented that framework. The project failed to generate a new language, instead relying on worn out clichés and buzz words.

Language also became a way to control the illusion of the partnership. What was missing was honest communication based on frankness and trust. At one of the last meetings, a dialogue was opened up to share our learnings over the year. There was little real communication that went one, because at the end of the meeting, it was apparent that what the university team was saying was not heard. Instead, the real underlying agenda was uncovered, which was for one person to be in charge of the project, the Director of the regional training network, and for the university team to work under its direction.

The project failed to generate any stories of success, belief statements, and systems for communication among and across role groups. Also missing were symbols that would have suggested a spirit of collaboration such as project logos, informal gatherings to celebrate successes, and neutral meeting sites. The structure and selection of members for task groups and committees became a vehicle for what Pfeffer (1992) concludes is a process for selecting people for committees so as to exact their loyalty to a particular partner. Finally, there were no resources granted to the university to facilitate communication to the school district partners. The regional training network controlled the secretarial and communication processes to the other partners through meetings, written communication, and the eventual disbanding of the Steering Committee.

The Missing "X Factor": Trust

In the project, expectations for partnership behavior were never discussed. Again, assumptions were made about the professionalism and *character* of the partners. Bennis (1993) asserts that of the four competencies of leadership: technical competence, people skills, conceptual skills, judgment, and character, "effective leadership is overwhelmingly

the function of only one of these - character" (p. 75). Subordinates, according to Bennis, delineate what character is by stating that they want leaders with a vision who are trustworthy, and optimistic about the future. Bennis defines trust as reliability and constancy. But Handy (1994) would take the concept of trust one step further and declare that "Confidence depends in the end on knowing who the other people are, what they stand for, how far they will go . . . on basic human qualities like authenticity, integrity, and character" (p. 140).

Peters 1992) discusses trust as the "Missing X Factor" in organizations. Ironically, Peters illustrates a credo of trust from McLean's Federal Correctional Institution located in Bradford, Pennsylvania, which received a 99.3 accreditation rating from the American Correctional Association, "the highest in the Bureau of Prisons" (p. 253). McLean's "Beliefs About The Treatment Of Inmates" represents an applied example of institutionalizing a culture of trust. Certainly, if prisons can create cultures of trust, anyone can, unless they are "prisoners" of belief systems that promote distrust. McLean's addressed the issue of trust through expectations of how people would behave with one another.

The idea of authenticity is discussed in an article by Kerpan (1993) in which she addressed the challenges of entering the 21st century as a *balancing act* that promotes growth for individuals, organizations, and societies within a global community. She discusses eight "old paradigm" views by juxtaposing them to "new paradigm" ways of thinking. Of the eight views, three dealt directly with promoting trust. The first one was moving from the paradigm of "Acceptance of duplicity as a way of being" to "Authenticity as a standard in all human affairs" (p. 82); the second one was changing the idea of "Competing in the context of a win-lose model" to "Collaborating in the context of a win-win model" (p. 83); and finally, she addressed the ways of acting that promoted "Valuing form over substance" to "Valuing substance over form" (p. 84).

The partnership accepted duplicity as a way of acting, and even though the rhetoric of "win-win" was used, that was hardly the reality of what happened to the university at the end. If people responded negatively to our work and its product, we might have concluded that we lacked the competencies that the project required. The opposite was true. There existed such a broad based enthusiasm for our work that we have to conclude that we apparently threatened the power base and authority of the regional training network with the State and its school districts.

The issue of form over substance was a disturbing aspect of the experience, but one that is less puzzling. However, if we as educatos continue to look only at packaging, and not what's inside, then school restructuring is in serious trouble. Questions *must* be

raised about substance. There were many instances when "gut" responses seemed to contradict the form of what was being said in the partnership. The question is and still remains: How do you challenge the substance, and possible duplicity of actions, without appearing petty, annoying or revengeful? Certainly silence is not the answer.

Sergiovanni (1990), building on the work of Burns, contrasts the difference between transactional and transformational leadership. "In transactional leadership, leaders and followers exchange needs and services in order to accomplish independent objectives" (p. 31). In transformative leadership "leaders and followers are in pursuit of higher level goals that are common to both" (p. 31). Transactional leaders satisfy basic human physical, security, social and ego needs, while transformational leaders build and satisfy self-esteem, competence, autonomy, and self-actualization needs

Levering (1988) distinguishes trust as a "gift interaction" among people which is different from a "commodity interaction," where people give up the least amount possible to maximize a low risk exchange. In a gift exchange, there is a high risk, as both sides give up something to achieve a common goal. The currency in the interaction is trust. Once this is breached, the betrayal is hard to repair, and may be impossible to ever repair. Limerick and Cunnington (1993) add that transformational leaders act directly on the culture, and "reflect values that embrace trust, respect, confidence, caring, coaching, creativity, proactivity, optimism, and enthusiasm" (p. 211). It is within the context of transformational leadership, that we believe successful partnerships should operate. The choice, however, is up to the members.

Issues of Power

Handy (1993) states that when there is mutual confidence in working relationships, then disagreements are handled successfully. But the nature of the partnership had disintegrated to power that was organized around who did what, instead of focusing on the core work of the project, and the standards for good work. The power had been defined within a hierarchy; the network took over control of all work. The project, although jointly funded with the university and regional training network, had never moved beyond the bureaucratic mandate of the proposal submitted to the Commission.

The regional training network had gained control over the resources from the onset of the project to avoid the university's direct cost of administering the proposal, or so it seemed. Pfeffer (1992, p. 83) equates the "New Golden Rule" as control over resources which he likens to "power over." Several other bases for controlling resources are illustrated by Pfeffer (1992). The first is possession of resources, which depends on the social-political context, enforceable by social consensus. The regional training

network had sent out most the correspondence on the project, made the formal appointments of the Steering Committee members (although these members worked with the university to make decisions), and had the State contacts for submitting the budget proposal for the second year's funding. This created an illusion that the network exercised control over the project with the school district partners .

The second is access to resources. The first year of the project had been primarily the university team's work. Yet, there was no access to the financial and informational resources of the project, which were controlled through the regional training network. The network set the rules for utilizing the resources, and in the end, decided who they would include in the second year of the funding proposal, even how much money the university team could propose for studying the effects of the pilot of the *EQBS*. The only thing the regional training network did not control was the Quality System, which the university team developed. Pfeffer (1992) offers this insight about domination over resources in his discussion of the expansion of power.

> Structural power is developed by obtaining control of a unit rich in resources, information and formal authority, on the one hand, and by preventing your opponents form gaining structural bases of power, on the other hand. Once you have gained control of a unit, structural reorganizations can be employed to expand your unit's sphere of influence, thereby enhancing the power at the expense of competing units in your organization (p. 271).

If the word Quality System is substituted for resources, then it becomes apparent why the regional training network wanted control over the Quality System. The breakdown in trust had become a power struggle over the *EQBS*, which the regional training network claimed belonged to the project (their project). Handy (1993, p. 137) suggested "What you do not own, you cannot dictate... ." In order for the regional training network to dictate the use of the *EQBS*, they needed to own it.

In a discussion on micropolitics by Eric Hoyle (1988), micropolitics was defined as "strategies by which individual and groups seek to use their resources of power and influence to further their interests" (p. 256). Politics is concerned with interests, and often the idea of coercion over others is ignored according to Hoyle. Interests include personal, professional and political spheres of influence (Hoyle, 1988). He suggested that when an innovation threatens the turf of a particular group of people, then resistance to the innovation can occur through the mobilization of forces against another party. In the project, the regional training network was interested in training for the new system. The knowledge of the university team may have threatened the regional network's territory.

Apparently, there was resistance to the university team's participating in the project, because the result was that only the regional network carried on the project the second year, what they piloted, however, is unclear. The Steering Committee was disbanded and the Regional Training Network's Board of Directors took over the project.

The paper, up until this point has presented the context for the partnership process, a model for dialoguing issues of power, and some fundamental factors that we believe contribute to successful partnering processes, which eventually effected the outcomes. But, most importantly, we learned that operating from similar epistemological and philosophical frameworks is essential for partners who want to work together collaboratively to transform existing work structures. Because of our collective experience, we have now come to see that Quality within a Dominator Bureaucratic Model, will not transform the outcomes of schooling. For Quality to be successful, a mindshift to a different way of working, that examines the construct of power relationships among people, must occur. Without beginning to swim to the other side of the river, the Partnership/Network side, nothing will change. The next section of the paper shares the product that was developed as a result of the partnership (*EQBS*), with its two models to assist schools in their change process over time. Educators are challenged to think of Quality as the means of getting to a new bank on the river, and not in the whirlpool of the bureacracy.

PART THREE: THE PRODUCT: THE EDUCATION QUALITY BENCHMARK SYSTEM

A Quality framework (*EQBS*) was designed to assist educators within a Systems and Change environment to create new structures for work in schools. No longer can schools and districts improve outdated and unresponsive bureaucratic systems, which are driven by policy, program, budget and political agendas. These reasons are insufficient for creating the kinds of schools that will prepare our youth to face the challenges of the next century. We must address the changing social and technological environment in which schools operate, within a different worldview, to design systems that are socially constructed, and responsive to the internal and external customers schools serve.

No longer can we limit the focus of change on individual teachers in individual classrooms, or spend most of our time figuring out how to maintain control over students through discipline programs (Glasser, 1990). Many of these discipline programs have failed to identify the essential problems in schools: Students who are passive recipients of the learning process may be reacting to the external mechanisms used to control them, in

which they have limited involvement. Schools can only begin to affect change in student behavior, when they alter some of their existing structures, and transform the way both teachers and students work together. In order to make this happen, teachers and students must become managers and co-constuctors of the processes of work in a Quality learning environment.

A Quality framework (*EQBS*) was designed to examine what systems need to be improved to help more of our students succeed routinely, not just with Basics, but with the essential personal and performance requirements outlined in *SCANS*. Quality was viewed as the vehicle for assisting schools to shed bureaucratic features, and design new processes of work. The *Education Quality Benchmark System* is designed around nine dimensions of work within the *Quality Performance System Model* (See Figure 3). The umbrella, or overarching feature of a Quality organization, is the dimension of *a Quality Work Culture*, which provides the context for work in the educational organization that supports all the other dimensions. There are seven other dimensions called Performance Areas and one Result Area that describe the system of work and its effects. The final dimensions is *Continual Improvement*, the thread referred to as the Kaizen Expressway, that stimulates all Performance Areas in an ongoing system-wide improvement. The six interconnected Performance Areas function together interdependently to enhance the energy for work. The Result Area of *Customer Success and Satisfaction*, depicted as the inner dimension of the model, is the result of all the work within the system.

A *Quality Work Culture* influences the overall system-wide response to customer needs and expectations, which impacts the desired outcomes in the Result Area of *Customer Success and Satisfaction*. Customer needs and expectations, which are internal as well as external to the institution, are based on organizational cultural norms and values, as well as societal cultural norms and values. These needs and expectations drive organizational development over time, affecting vision and organizational purpose. They influence both the individual and organizational capacity for adaptation, change, and responsiveness to altering conditions and trends in the educational environment.

Below are the **four parts** to the Model and the **nine dimensions** of the system.

FOUR PARTS	**NINE DIMENSIONS**
Part I. Umbrella:	*1. Quality Work Culture*
Part II. Kaizen Expressway:	*2. Continual Improvement*
Part III. Performance Areas:	
Performance Area 1:	*3. Visionary Leadership*
Performance Area 2:	*4. Strategic Planning*
Performance Area 3:	*5. Systems Thinking and Action*

Performance Area 4:	6. *Information Systems*
Performance Area 5:	7. *Human Resource Development*
Performance Area 6:	8. *Quality Services*
Part IV. Result Area:	9. *Customer Success & Satisfaction*

[Insert Figure 3 here]

The Purpose of the EQBS

The content of the system has undergone an extensive content validation that was both quantitative and qualitative (Acker-Hocevar, 1994), and received high marks from all participants in the validation study. The participants included Superintendents, Principals, District Personnel, Teachers, the Business Community, State Leaders in Reform and Restructuring, and national Quality and Schooling Reform experts. Comments from the various participants concerning their overall reaction to the system were very positive and included remarks such as: *The Quality Performance System appears to be an important breakthrough in the assessment and diagnosis of organizational performance and results areas, which might have applicability to a broad spectrum of organizations, both private and public.* Another participant wrote: *The indicators that are descriptors of the Quality Change Process provide a clear and relevant format for self-assessment. Well-designed.*

The system is both a framework for managing change, and a diagnostic tool for educators to use to assess the work cultures in place in districts and schools, in order to better align Quality Systems for schooling. The *EQBS* provides schools with the opportunity to strengthen the direction of the change process through the use of a diagnostic process in conjunction with the *Quality Change Process Model* (Figure 4) and the Organizational Development Phases (Table 1).

[Insert Figure 4 here]

[Insert Table 1 here]

The *Organizational Development Phases* illustrate the conceptual and theoretical perspective for indicators under the four phases of development: 1) bureaucratic, 2) awareness, 3) transition, and 4) transformation to a Quality System. These phases are depicted in the *Quality Change Process Model*, as systems are continuously improved over time. Table 2 identifies the outcomes in the different performance and result areas. Indicators under each of the Development Phases depict, then, this change process over time from a Bureaucratic System to a Quality System.

[Insert Table 2]

Quality Change Process Model

The Quality System found at the other end of the continuum in Figure 4 is fundamentally different from the bureaucratic system in its purpose and delivery of services. Its goal is to identify specific student needs, rather than to fit students into "canned" programs. Given a "responsiveness" orientation, workers are free to continuously innovate programs and services to enhance client success and satisfaction. Rather than relying on the dependence upon established practice, workers in high performing organizations are encouraged to function independently as professionals, while working interdependently to achieve new purposes. Systems thinking encourages members in the organization to assume new responsibilities for the overall success of services and results. Transforming structures, policies and programs from the control emphasis of the bureaucratic system to responsive patterns found in Quality Systems, requires attention to the development of work culture over time.

***EQBS* in Relation to Restructuring**

During the past several years we have observed schools and districts as they engage in a wide variety of professional development activities to learn the basic principles of Quality and some process tools. It now seems clear that some districts are using the Quality language and tools to continually improve the traditions of schooling, that have little to do with preparing all students for success in life. Other districts are adopting Quality to transform schools for students, and redefining the roles and relationships of their members within Systems Thinking. If Quality is to be successful, it must be adopted within an epistemological framework of socially constructing more responsive organizations. Simply adopting a new language rooted in vestiges of scientific management, and efficiency measures negates what we have learned about successful organizational practices and human motivation over the last 50 years (see the *Cult of Efficiency* by Callahan). Therefore, if Quality is going to be successful, a fundamental mindshift must occur as organizations begin to unfreeze traditional work patterns.

Earlier in the paper, two different epistemological frameworks were presented. Under the scientific rational model of Taylor, Quality is viewed as the new "one best way." It maximizes human productivity and stifles the autonomy of cross functional teams that need to work to devise new work systems that focus on the efficiency of the system as it relates to the basic purposes and vision of schooling. Understanding the different

philosophical and epistemological frameworks of Quality, and ensuring that common mental models are constructed to guide its adoption, will ensure the measure of its success. The lessons learned from our partnership have made it even more evident to us the necessity to develop the processes of the Quality Culture to ensure its success. We suggest that our learnings in the partnership in restructuring are relevant for those moving into a Quality System. For without a fundamental mindshift, the new rhetoric is Taylor revisited. One of the teacher participants of the content validation wrote this: *Your Quality Change Process Model is casting stones at the Bureaucratic System without taking some of the necessary (legal) and good points to the Quality System. Will the Quality System become another Bureaucratic System?* The choice is yours.

SUMMARY OF KEY LEARNINGS

The partnership story is one of both developing a successful product and the not so successful designing of processes of communication, trust, culture building, dealing with issues of power, and developing a shared belief system in a changing worldview. The purpose of the partnership was to help school districts with their implementation of *Blueprint 2000*. A shared vision of the workings of the partners never evolved. The culture of the partnership remained competitive, and distrust resulted over the roles and responsibilities of the members within the partnerhship at the end of the first year. The epistemological frameworks of the two agencies were different as well as their philosophical orientations. The regional training network was interested in a concrete product in which they could conduct training in the pilots. The university was committed to a product that had utility and feasibility for a greater application in the schools in the State.

The regional training network did not see the necessity of conducting further research on the Quality System in the pilots. They were interested in the effects of the training, and never acknowledged the Quality System's (*EQBS*) usefulness as a diagnostic benchmark system or the necessity to conduct field testing of the system. They still felt that they had to design additional tools for the schools to use. This caused a fundamental disagreement with the university and the regional training network over the use of Quality tools. The university felt that developing tools in isolation made no sense. We tried to argue that the *Education Quality Benchmark System* provided the schools with a snapshot of where they were now. Through additional data collection and analysis (interviews, surveys, questionnaires, and/or documents), schools could triangulate data sources that

made sense to them to support their perceptions, and plans for school improvement. The network could assist them in their development of these tools as the need emerged.

Initially, if the two partners (the university and the network) had dialogued and agreed upon an operational framework for dealing with issues of power within the partnership, self-interest, control and ownership may have been minimized, and the joint interests of both partners achieved. Now it seems very clear that before any partnering will be done in the future, a rather candid discussion of each party's needs will take place. What are the interests of party A? What are the interests of party B, C etc.? Where is the overlap? Can each party assist the other in achieving their personal goals, as well as the joint goals of the project.

To understand the effects of the partnership, the patterns that emerged over the year need to be viewed in their entirety. Our learnings concerning these subtleties and issues around power led us to conceive of the *Power River* to assist others in identifying where they were in their perceptions of sharing power in partnerships. Our conclusions are that personal mastery (Senge, 1991) and shared mental models of power, can create high involvement cultures based on new models of partnerships. We suggest that partnerships grow out of what Limerick and Cunnington (1993) identify as the new managerial competencies of empathy, trust, and the management of symbols (p. xviii). They state that Quality is one of the new organizational philosophies that encompasses the new organizational prototype.

We have concluded that Quality can only be a new organizational prototype if issues of power, resources and creating high involvement cultures are addressed, within a social constructivist paradigm. If Quality is superimposed on the Bureaucratic Dominator Model, it will not alter basic power structures, nor transform the work cultures of schools. Organizational learning must be ongoing (Argyris & Schnook, 1978; Garvin, 1993; Kaufman & Zahn, 1993), and members must be willing to be flexible as well as planned as they adapt to new information and learning (Handy, 1994). Finally, self-interest must be balanced with the interests of the organization and community to solve problems that work toward the greater good of the larger community.

Retrospective Insights

We believe that what we experienced was situated within a larger context of a changing worldview and shifting philosophies that are redefining work processes for how people will work together in the future. The *Power River*, which resulted from this conclusion, suggests two different philosophical and epistemological lens for viewing these changing work processes within the partnership development. Further, the *Power*

River suggests that there are choices to be made, and readiness assessments of individuals and organizations that need to occur in determining the organization's readiness for partnership activities. Multiple perspectives of what collaboration means and how it might be enacted under different philosophical and epistemological frameworks need to be discussed. These frameworks, then, set criteria and standards to judge the success or lack of it in a partnership.

We contend that process is as important as the product of a partnership. The failure to discern the magnitude of differing worldviews, the erroneous assumptions made concerning the collaboration among the partners, the neglect to establish shared definitions and mental models of work in which to challenge incongruent behaviors, and the lack of communication structures to frankly discuss the progress of the partnership contributed to misunderstandings in the partnership. In the end, we were left with a feeling that we had been mere factors of production, not partners in a co-construction, consultants, not peers. To isolate training, without a philosophical and conceptual understanding fragmented the work of the first year. Without, shared beliefs, the results and interpretations of the success of the partnership represent partial truths, which may never fully be understood in total.

Recommendations for Partnerships or Users of the EQBS

When we can move away from issues of control, ownership, and "power over," perhaps, we can begin to build better partnerships. Transformative partnerships call for a new language that leaves the scientific rational model behind and incorporates some of the premises of humanism, quality and systems thinking into its processes and work design. Traditional patterns of organizational development, which grew out of the past eras of management and organizational theory, are limited in their perspectives to assist organizations in becoming learning communities. The past OD Model assumes that someone is going to be telling someone else what to do. In order to assist schools to adopt Quality, the "expert" of the past era must become a collaborator and facilitator of communication and a designer of new work systems for the future era of work. Rhetoric, masked in partnership guises of co-optation and control over resources, must be uncovered through the use of shared mental models like the *Power River* that permit neutral dialogue around constructs of power, change and culture.

Organizational development should build on the readiness of the organization (Snyder, 1988) in terms of its understanding of its Work Culture, Change, Systems Thinking, Communication Processes, and Power within the context of moving to a Quality System. An attitude toward inventing new systems of work should replace the deficiency

models grounded in the OD process. Fear and intimidation ought to be replaced with cooperation and rewards that are internally driven. Organizations must be designed to create learning, joy, and trust to achieve both personal and organizational outcomes. People ought to work in organizations that sanction asking questions, and permit the critical examination of decisions, programs and services that effect organizational outcomes that are measured against criteria and standards that enchance customer success and satisfaction. Finally, political agendas must be shaped by social agendas that build successful partnerships across institutions for the future sake of our children.

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Figure 1.

CHOICES IN SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTING ORGANIZATIONS

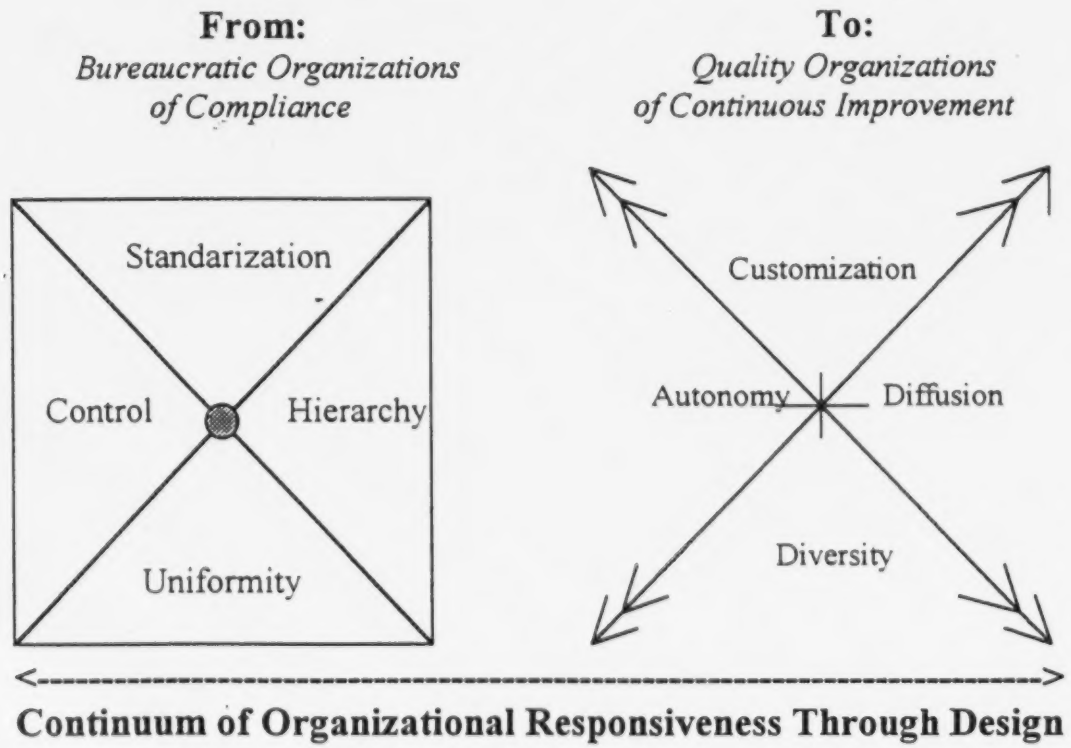
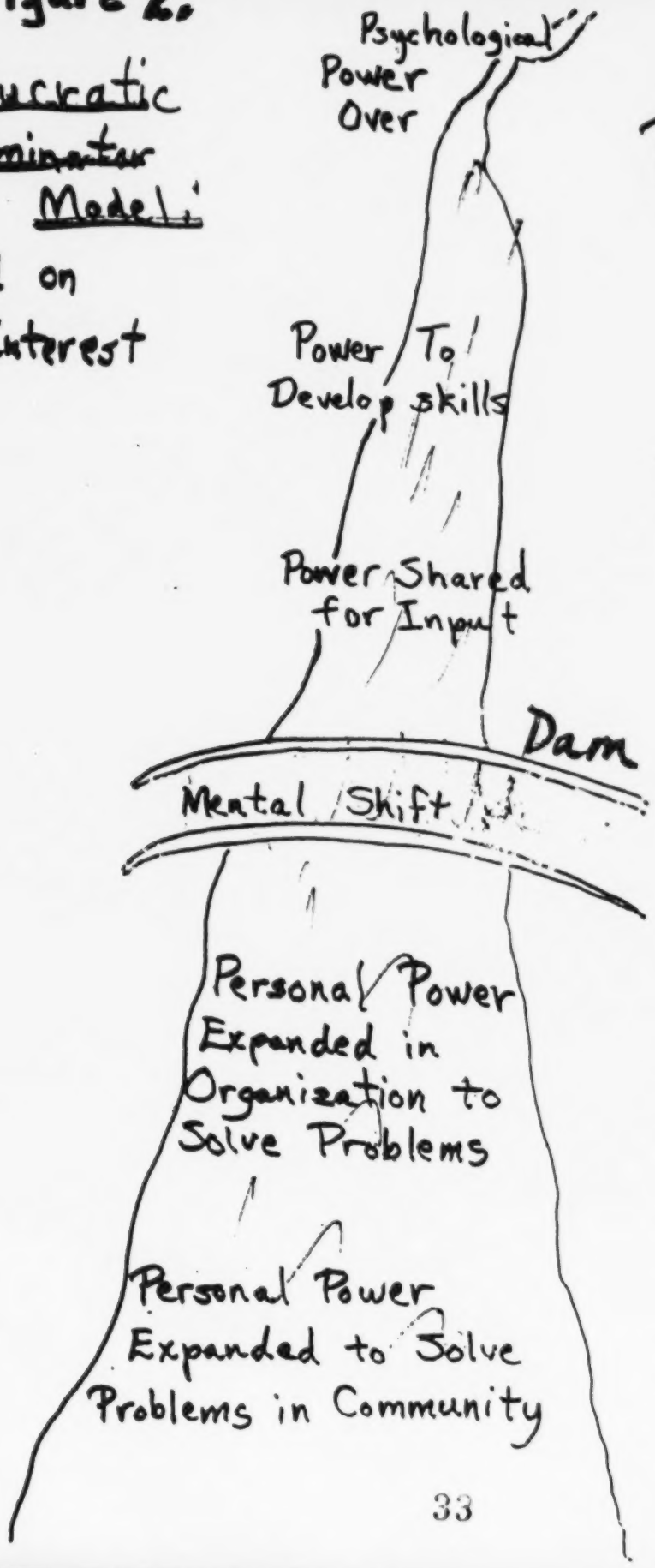


Figure 2.

River of Power

Bureaucratic Dominator Model:

Based on Self Interest


Psychological Power Over
Power To Develop Skills
Power Shared for Input
Dam
Mental Shift
Personal Power Expanded in Organization to Solve Problems
Personal Power Expanded to Solve Problems in Community

Network Partnership Model:

Based on Personal Needs and Needs of Others

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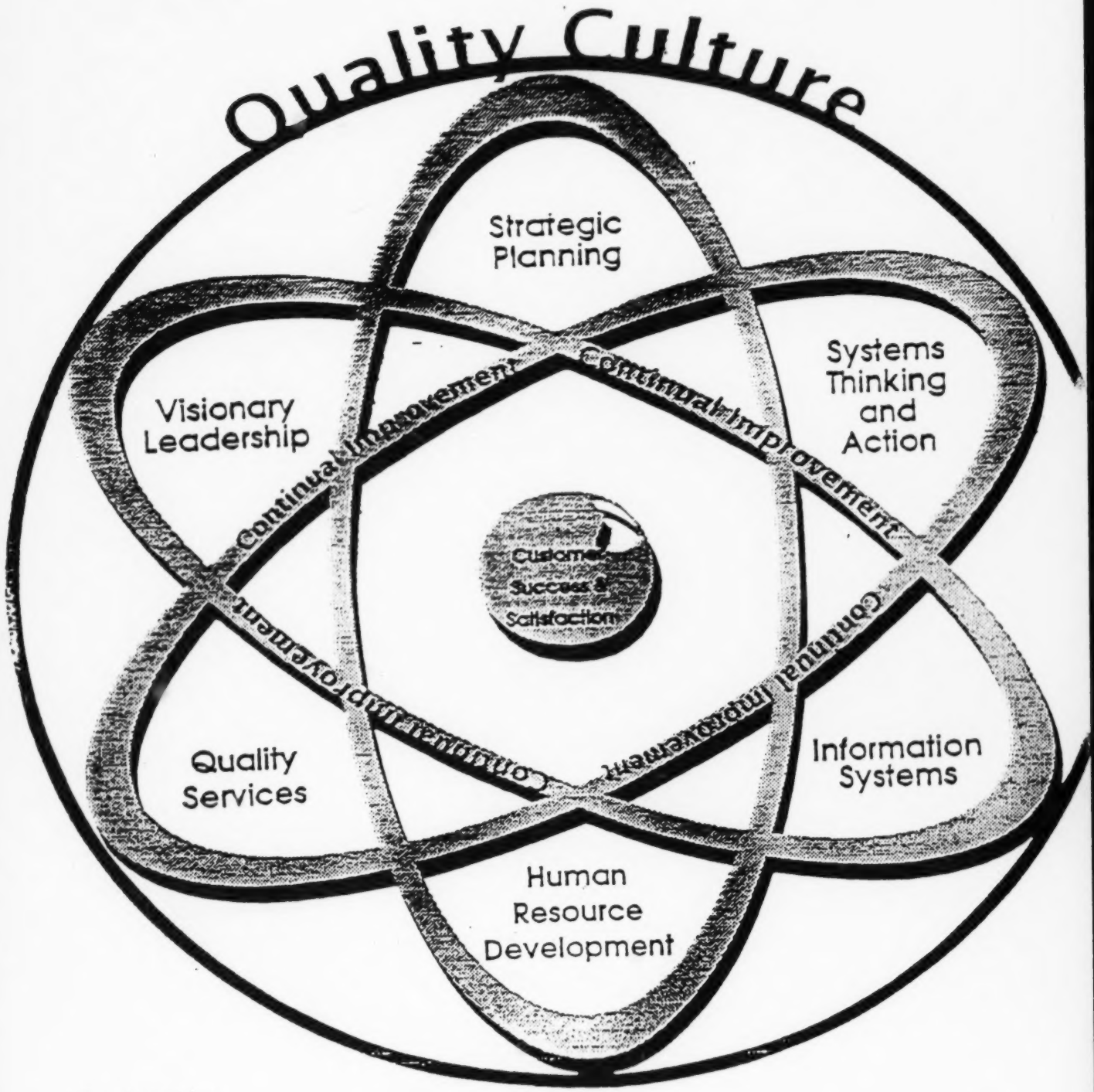
Education Quality System



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Quality Change Process Model

toward customer success and satisfaction

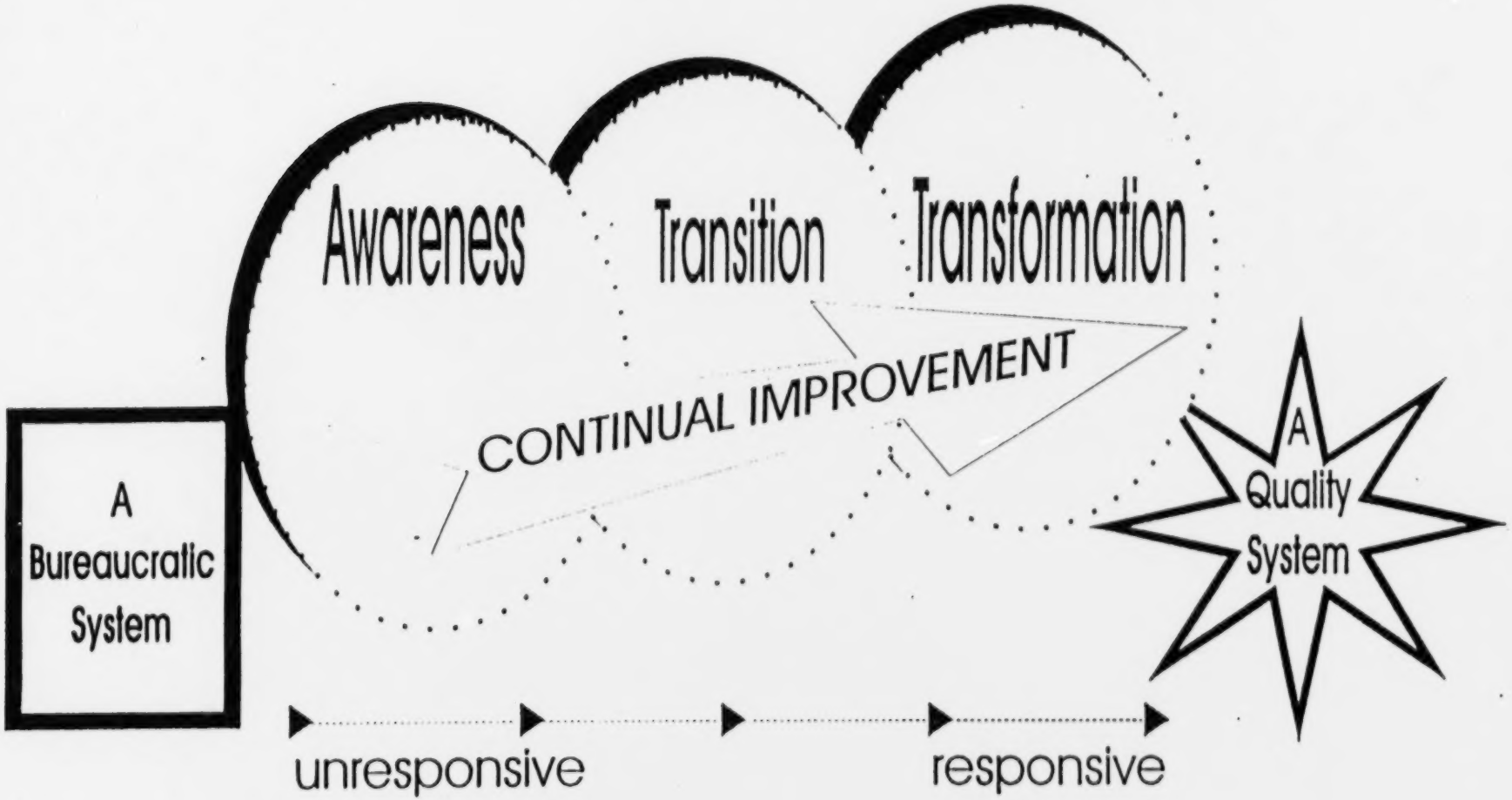

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Table 1

Organizational Development Phases

Phase Elements	Descriptions for Key Elements of the Phases
Bureaucratic Phase:	Current Way of Doing Business
Focus:	Institutional policies, programs, and regulations
Beneficiary:	Federal, State and District policy makers
Decision Makers:	Policy makers
Outcomes:	Compliance with policy, program guidelines and regulations
Data:	Gathered to meet policy requirements
Awareness Phase:	Organization Begins To Unfreeze Work Patterns
Focus:	Program improvement and professional development
Beneficiary:	Professional educators, programs and services
Decision Makers:	Administrators and School Improvement Team, Task Forces
Outcomes:	To meet school improvement requirements, and to gain more knowledge and skills
Data:	Collected to meet Federal, State, and District requirements
Transition Phase:	Change Process Under Way
Focus:	Organizational growth and improvement
Beneficiary:	The organization
Decision Makers:	Administrators, Unit Leaders, Members and Customer Groups
Outcome:	Beginning system interdependence and capacity building for organizational change
Data:	Base line data is used to meet state requirements, and to make decisions and to solve problems
Transformation Phase:	Organization Begins to Institutionalize New Work Processes and Structures
Focus:	Continuous systemic improvement and learning
Beneficiary:	The internal/external customers
Decision Makers:	Customers, Suppliers internal and external to the system
Outcomes:	Students ready for the 21st Century of work, family, and community, within a self renewing organization, responsive to changing environmental conditions
Data:	Synthesis of data drives decision making that impacts the results
Quality Phase:	Quality is institutionalized, with ongoing Continual Improvement

Table 2.
An Overview Table: Performance Outcomes

Performance Area 1: Visionary Leadership

1.1 Vision Building
1.2 Constancy of Purpose
1.3 Support for Change
1.4 Optimization of the System
1.5 Alignment of System with Purpose

Performance Area 2: Strategic Planning

2.1 Strategic Plan Development
2.2 Needs Assessment
2.3 Visionary Planning
2.4 Data Utilization
2.5 Information Access
2.6 Performance Standards
2.7 Resource Alignment
2.8 Resources Sought

Performance Area 3: Systems Thinking and Action

3.1 Alignment of Functions
3.2 Alignment of Services
3.3 Variation Identification
3.4 Knowledge Utilization
3.5 Process Improvement
3.6 Information Search
3.7 Worker Motivation
3.8 Barrier Removal
3.9 Organizational Structures
3.10 Systems Innovation
3.11 Internal Interdependence
3.12 External Interdependence
3.13 Piloting as a Way of Life

Performance Area 4: Information Systems

4.1 Quality Tools
4.2 Assessment Data
4.3 Tools and Technology
4.4 Feedback
4.5 Systems Control
4.6 Systems Control
4.7 Communications Systems

Performance Area 5: Human Resource Development

5.1 Lifelong Learning
5.2 Training Services
5.3 Trainers/Facilitators
5.4 Coaching and Mentoring
5.5 Learning Organization
5.6 Knowledge Development
5.7 Performance Recognition
5.8 Employee Health and Job Satisfaction
5.9 Optimism

Performance Area 6: Quality Services

6.1 Services Meet Needs
6.2 Customer/Supplier Relationships
6.3 Service Measures

Result Area: Customer Success and Satisfaction

1. Trends
2. Responsiveness
3. Commitment